

Panama-Mexico to challenge for a place in the Qatar 2022 World Cup



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Havana, September 8 (RHC)-- Panama's national soccer team faces today its Mexican counterpart in a CONCACAF pre-World Cup challenge for Qatar 2022, the seventh match between the two teams in a World Cup qualifier.

The match, to be played at the Rommel Fernández stadium in the capital of the Isthmus, is a challenge for the locals, who have accumulated three draws at home and three defeats on Mexican soil in previous encounters, while the only Panamanian scorer in these games was local striker Luis "Matador" Tejada.

Although the tournament is still in its early stages, Mexico has reached the date undefeated in the first place of the octagonal of the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (Concacaf), followed by Panama, so experts warn that the Aztec team will show its muscle to continue at the top of the table, facing the dream of La Rojita (as they call the home team) to dethrone it.

However, the Mexicans did not show their usual grit in their last two matches against weaker opponents on paper, but they could show their class and defend their leadership of the tournament, although no longer with the wide advantages in the zone, which at some point allowed them to go the distance.

For his part, the Panamanian coach, Thomas Christiansen, will have all his players at his disposal and is unlikely to make changes due to the performance achieved so far, where they played a game of touch, characterized by high pressure and speed in attack.

Here are the previous results of the matches in the final phase of the qualifiers for the last World Cups between Wednesday's opponents:

Pan 1-1 Mex on March 30, 2005, Rommel Fernandez; Mex 5-0 Pan on September 7, 2005, Estadio Azteca; Pan 0-0 Mex on June 7, 2013, Rommel Fernandez; Mex 2-1 Pan on October 11, 2013, Estadio Azteca; Pan 0-0 Mex on November 15, 2016, Rommel Fernandez and Mex 1-0 Pan on September 1, 2017, Estadio Azteca.

After the first challenges of the current qualifying round, Mexico has six points, following victories over Jamaica (2-1) and Costa Rica (1-0); Panama accumulates four points after drawing with Costa Rica and beating Jamaica (3-0); with two points are followed by Canada, the United States and Honduras; while El Salvador and Costa Rica have one, and Jamaica zero.

In the CONCACAF octagonal round-robin games, the first three teams will have a direct ticket to the World Cup, while the fourth team will have half a pass to play in the intercontinental playoff in June 2022.

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